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## **Gov't: Some Gitmo Cases Should Be Scuttled**

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WASHINGTON — The Bush administration argued Friday that a newly enacted law wipes out hundreds of pending court cases by detainees in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who are challenging their confinement.

In papers filed with a federal appeals court, the Justice Department said the Detainee Treatment Act signed by President Bush on Dec. 30 restricts detainees' rights to reviews by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia.

The reviews are limited, said the Justice Department, to the question of whether the detainees have been correctly categorized by the U.S. military as enemy combatants.

The enemy combatant designation enables the U.S. military to hold the detainees indefinitely.

Lawyers for the detainees say the new law does not cover pre-existing cases filed in U.S. District Courts, which deal with a wide range of issues, from allegations of prisoner abuse to assertions that detainees have no ties to terrorism and should be released.

Set up more than four years ago after the war in Afghanistan, the Guantanamo Bay prison camp is holding some 500 detainees. Some have been there since the facility opened.

In 2004, the Supreme Court said the detainees were entitled to file petitions in the federal court system, resulting in more than 200 cases covering over 300 detainees.

At issue is the legislative intent of the Detainee Treatment Act, a compromise reached among Sens. Carl Levin, D-Mich., Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Jon Kyl, R-Ariz.

Lawyers for the detainees and Levin say the new law does not cover pending cases. Graham, Kyl and the Bush administration insist that it does.